

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07

COME-00 TRSE-00 OFA-01 OES-03 SAM-01 IO-10 USPS-01

SCA-01 /082 W

----- 105276

R 280910Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0994

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 5919

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GE, US

SUBJECT: US-GDR RELATIONS

ON JUNE 24 DCM MET WITH DR. GEYER, HEAD OF THE NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, IN WHAT HAS BECOME A SERIES OF ROUTINE MEETINGS OVER LUNCHEVERY MONTH OR SO. FOLLOWING ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF A DISCUSSION DURING WHICH THE ATMOSPHERE WAS ALWAYS CORDIAL.

1. AMBASSADOR'S PROTEST

THE ONE SUBJECT DR. GEYER SEEMED TO HAVE ON HIS MIND TO RAISE SPECIFICALLY CONCERNED AN APPARENT FOLLOW-ON BY THE DEPARTMENT TO THE PROTEST MADE BY AMBASSADOR COOPER AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ON MAY 29, 1975 CONCERNING CERTAIN OFFENSIVE GDR STATEMENTS ABOUT US POLICY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA (BERLIN 5756). GEYER SAID THE MATTER HAD BEEN ADVERTED TO IN THE DEPARTMENT DURING CONVERSATIONS WITH GDR EMBASSY OFFICIALS AS RECENTLY AS JUNE 20, AND ASKED WHAT SIGNIFICANCE THE REPETITION OF US VIEWS ON THIS MATTER MIGHT HAVE. HE SAID HE HAD SPECIFICALLY BEEN ASKED BY DEPUTY MINISTER KROLIKOWSKI TO PUT THIS QUESTION TO US, BECAUSE THE GDR CONSIDERED THE MATTER TO HAVE

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BEEN CLOSED BY AMBASSADOR COOPER'S MEETING WITH

KROLIKOWSKI ON MAY 29. DCM REPLIED THAT UNLESS THERE WERE NEW DEVELOPMENTS OF WHICH HE WAS NOT AWARE, THE EMBASSY CONSIDERED THAT THE POINT HAD BEEN MADE BY AMBASSADOR COOPER'S PROTEST.

2. GEYER THEN EXPANDED ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE US PROTEST. HE SAID THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAD BEEN AWARE IN ADVANCE OF THE PURPOSE OF AMBASSADOR COOPER'S CALL ON KROLIKOWSKI, HAVING LEARNED ABOUT THE MATTER IN WASHINGTON, "BUT NOT FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT". THERE HAD BEEN A HIGH LEVEL MEETING AT THE PARTY LEVEL TO DECIDE HOW TO RESPOND TO WHAT AMBASSADOR COOPER WAS EXPECTED TO SAY. GEYER SAID HE HOPED THE USG HAD NOTICED THAT ALTHOUGH THE GDR HAD "REJECTED" AMBASSADOR COOPER'S PROTEST, IT HAD NOT RETURNED TO HIM THE AIDE-MEMOIRE FROM WHICH THE AMBASSADOR HAD READ AND WHICH WAS LEFT WITH KROLIKOWSKI. DCM REPLIED THAT THE EMBASSY HAD OF COURSE NOTED THIS AND HAD, FURTHERMORE, REPORTED THE FACT TO WASHINGTON. DCM THEN SAID THAT THE US HAD TAKEN THE OFFENDING GDR STATEMENTS VERY SERIOUSLY. THESE STATEMENTS HAD COME TO THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF SECRETARY KISSINGER WHO WAS EXTREMELY ANNOYED BY SUCH ACTIONS AND THE LANGUAGE THAT HAD BEEN USED. DCM EMPHASIZED THAT WHILE HE AGREED THAT THE MATTER SHOULD NOW BE CONSIDERED CLOSED, IT WOULD BE AN ERROR TO TAKE LIGHTLY THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION THAT HAD GIVEN RISE TO OUR PROTEST. (COMMENT: UNLESS THERE ARE NEW DEVELOPMENTS OF WHICH WE ARE NOT AWARE, THE EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT THIS MATTER NOT BE DISCUSSED FURTHER WITH GDR OFFICIALS.)

3. AXEN VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES

DR. GEYER REFERRED TO THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN AMBASSADOR COOPER AND VICE FOREIGN MINISTER GRUNERT AT THE RESIDENCE ON MAY 29, DURING WHICH GRUNERT HAD SUGGESTED THAT POLITBURO MEMBER AXEN, WHOM GEYER, TOO, DESCRIBED AS THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON IN GDR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WAS CONSIDERING A VISIT TO THE US TO ATTEND THE CPUSA MEETING IN CHICAGO AND THEN TO PROCEED TO WASHINGTON TO MEET WITH USG OFFICIALS. GEYER SAID HE HOPED THE US HAD

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NOTED THAT AXEN HAD NOT FOLLOWED UP WITH A VISA APPLICATION. DCM RESPONDED THAT THE US HAD BEEN SURPRISED BY THE SUGGESTION THAT A PERSON OF MR. AXEN'S STATURE WOULD THINK OF GOING TO THE US FOR THE PURPOSE WE HAD BEEN GIVEN. IT WAS THE DCM'S OPINION THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN AN ENORMOUS ERROR AND A GROSS MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE US FOR THE GDR TO HAVE PRESSED FOR THE ISSUANCE OF A VISA FOR MR. AXEN. DCM THEN REVIEWED THE REASONS FOR THE

EMBASSY'S TURN-DOWN OF VISA APPLICATIONS BY TWO MINOR GDR OFFICIALS WHO HAD SUBSEQUENTLY SOUGHT TO ATTEND THE CPUSA CONFERENCE (STATE 145940). GEYER TOOK ALL OF THIS IN GOOD GRACE, AND INDEED LEFT THE IMPRESSION THAT HE AND GRUNERT HAD BEEN AWARE OF THE IMPROPRIETY OF THE AXEN REQUEST, BUT HAD BEEN UNDER FIRM INSTRUCTIONS TO PURSUE IT WITH THE AMBASSADOR.

4. ECONOMIC RELATIONS

DCM VOLUNTEERED TO GEYER THE REASONS FOR THE EMBASSY'S DECISION NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LEIPZIG FALL FAIR THROUGH AN EXHIBIT (BERLIN 5853). ASIDE FROM FACTORS HAVING TO DO WITH PUTTING TOGETHER AN EFFECTIVE EXHIBIT IN THE REMAINING TIME AVAILABLE, THERE WAS THE ADDITIONAL COMPLICATION OF THE IMMINENT TRANSFER OF THE EMBASSY'S SOLE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL OFFICER WITHOUT A REPLACEMENT IN SIGHT. DR. GEYER WAS ASTONISHED THAT THIS WAS TO OCCUR WITHOUT OVERLAP, AND HAD WORDS OF HIGH PRAISE FOR FSO FELIX BLOCH. HE DID NOT APPEAR TROUBLED BY OUR DECISION TO POSTPONE PARTICIPATION BY MEANS OF AN EXHIBIT AT THE FAIR UNTIL THE SPRING OF 1976, AND UNDERSTOOD OUR NEED TO GO BEYOND THE MERE REPETITION OF THIS SPRING'S BDO.

5. HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

DCM SAID HE WISHED TO RAISE A SUBJECT WITH DR. GEYER THAT IT HAD NOT, UP TO THIS TIME, BEEN NECESSARY TO DISCUSS WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, I.E. THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE HOUSING FOR THE SMALL US STAFF IN BERLIN. AFTER ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THE EMBASSY HAD BEEN RELATIVELY WELL PROVIDED FOR BY MR. LOEFFLER OF THE DIENSTLEISTUNGSAMT, DCM POINTED OUT THAT ALTHOUGH WE HAD BEEN PROMISED TWO

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ADDITIONAL HOUSES AND ALSO HAD REQUESTED ADDITIONAL APARTMENTS TO ACCOMMODATE FIVE NEW STAFF MEMBERS WHO ARE EXPECTED IN THE COMING MONTHS, THERE SEEMED TO BE NO PROGRESS TOWARD THE ACQUISITION OF THESE URGENTLY

NEEDED ACCOMMODATIONS. DCM SAID HE HAD AN APPOINTMENT WITH LOEFFLER ON JULY 3 TO DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT AND HOPED THAT PROGRESS COULD BE MADE. DR. GEYER EXPRESSED HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THIS DIFFICULTY, AND WE EXPECT THAT HE WILL GET WORD TO THE DLA ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF THE JULY 3 MEETING.

6. GDR ACCOMMODATIONS IN WASHINGTON

THE SUBJECT OF HOUSING LED DR. GEYER TO OBSERVE THAT THE

GDR HAD ALL BUT GIVEN UP HOPE OF OBTAINING THE EQUITABLE LIFE BUILDING ON WISCONSIN AVENUE THAT IT HAD SOUGHT AS CHANCERY AND RESIDENCE. THE PROBLEM HAD BEEN TO ACQUIRE SUFFICIENT MORTGAGE MONEY AT ACCEPTABLE INTEREST RATES. THE GDR NOW INTENDED TO EXPAND ITS PRESENT OFFICE SPACE, AND TO SEEK NEW HOUSING FOR THE AMBASSADOR ONLY.

7. NEGOTIATIONS

A. FISHERIES

GEYER SAID THAT THE GDR HAD BEEN DISAPPOINTED THAT, ALTHOUGH THE US WAS WILLING TO DISCUSS A FISHERIES AGREEMENT WITH POLAND, IT WAS NOT PREPARED TO DO THE SAME WITH THE GDR. DCM DREW ON THE RECENT CONVERSATION BETWEEN ANDERSON OF EUR/CE AND ELM TO EXPLAIN THE REASONS FOR THE US VIEW. GEYER NOTED THAT THE US AND GDR POSITIONS ON LAW OF THE SEA HAD OFTEN BEEN SIMILAR, TO WHICH DCM RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT WHILE THIS WAS TRUE, AND THE US WAS PLEASED AT THIS, THE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF STARTING TO NEGOTIATE A FISHERIES AGREEMENT AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME IN LIGHT OF PENDING CONGRESSIONAL LEGISLATION WERE OVERRIDING.

B. PARCEL POST

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GEYER SAID THAT NEGOTIATIONS FOR A PARCEL POST AGREEMENT WERE OFF TO A GOOD START, BUT LITTLE PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE FOR THE LAST FOUR WEEKS. HE SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT TO THE GDR TO REACH SOME AGREEMENTS WITH THE US IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE THAT OUR RELATIONS WENT BEYOND THE INITIAL SEPTEMBER 4, 1974 AGREED MINUTE. HE SAID HE HOPED THE PARCEL POST AGREEMENT WOULD BE SIGNED BEFORE SEPTEMBER.

C. CONSULAR CONVENTION

GEYER SAID THAT GDR NEGOTIATOR KLOBES WOULD SOON INFORM US THAT THE GDR PROPOSED JULY 21 AS THE DATE TO BEGIN THE SECOND ROUND OF CONSULAR CONVENTION TALKS IN EAST BERLIN.

D. HARTMENT VISIT

NOTING THAT AMBASSADOR SIEBER HAD INVITED ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN TO VISIT THE GDR THIS YEAR, GEYER ASKED WHETHER SUCH A TRIP WOULD, IN FACT, TAKE PLACE. DCM REPLIED BY REMINDING GEYER THAT MR. HARTMAN HAD EXPRESSED PLEASURE AT THE INVITATION AND HAD INDICATED

THAT IF HIS SCHEDULE PERMITTED, HE WOULD VISIT THE
GDR DURING THE LATTER PART OF THE YEAR. AT THIS TIME
NOTHING MORE SPECIFIC COULD BE SAID.COOPER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BERLIN05919
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750224-1098
From: BERLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975065/aaaaadsl.tel
Line Count: 226
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <16 OCT 2003 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US-GDR RELATIONS ON JUNE 24 DCM MET WITH DR. GEYER, HEAD OF THE NORTH AMERICAN
TAGS: PFOR, GC, US, (GEYER)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006